

EXHIBIT 3

NEW YORK CITY
LAW DEPARTMENT

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Interview of:

John Lash

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Date:

In the Matter of: Reference matter number 2019-041691

Transcribed by: Geneva Worldwide, Inc.

1 Sam: Sam: So how long have you and Stephen been partners?

2 John: 25 years.

3 Sam: Wow.

4 John: Yeah.

5 Sam: Wow, you guys are like brothers, huh?

6 * * *

7 Sam: Well, John, well, basically, what I'm going to do is we're, we're gonna talk
8 a little bit and you just kind of explain to me like this bulk stuff, how long
9 has this been going on?

10 John: Oh, I don't know, 18 years, maybe a little longer.

11 Sam: Has it been the same guys, Rob and all them or?

12 John: No, they come and go, you know.

13 Ryan: Who was the first person from New York that you dealt with?

14 John: Oh God, I can't remember. You know, that's --

15 Ryan: I, I know it's probably you're reaching back a little bit.

16 * * *

17 John: They, they come by the store. They didn't introduced to me. They just
18 come by.

19 Ryan: Just, just simply trying to get a bulk order?

20 John: Yeah, yeah.

21 Ryan: Okay.

22 Sam: So when the bulk orders come, how, how is the money -- I, I know from
23 your -- all your receipts that your employees graciously, which you should
24 smack them for not running those through shredders.

25 John: Yeah.

1 Sam: I mean just for -- from a --
2 John: We don't --
3 Sam: I mean bank, bank stuff and everything --
4 John: We don't try to be crooks or anything.
5 Sam: Oh, I know that and that's why we know that, that that's why that stuff was
6 thrown away, but just for the people that want to be hurtful to you.
7 John: Yeah.
8 Sam: You know, tell them to shred everything. I'm just gonna give you a
9 pointer because, you know, it was easy for -- most of these investigations,
10 John, take three years. Okay. The federal people wanted to work this
11 case. Okay. But we said, no, let us handle this case in state. Okay,
12 because federal stuff, you don't want to play with that and I know you
13 guys aren't bad people, John, I know that. And here --
14 * * *
15 Sam: John, back to all this. Do you know why people come to Virginia to buy
16 cigarettes and take them to New York?
17 John: Yeah, the cost.
18 Sam: Yeah, and do you know what, what, what the cost difference is? Do you
19 know why it is that way?
20 John: Probably \$60, \$70.
21 Sam: Yeah, it's very expensive. But do you know why, like is it, you know,
22 state tax? Right. Yeah, we're, we're good, buddy. Thank you. State taxes
23 is what, what causes it to be that high and unfortunately that's ridiculous
24 but in New York, their taxes are absolutely crazy.
25 John: Yeah, I know.

1 * * *

2 Ryan: Doesn't -- I mean all, all these people are from New York.

3 John: Yeah, I knew a lot of them are from New York or [unclear] [00:46:05].

4 Ryan: Did you know that they were going to be bringing their, their bulk orders
5 back to New York?

6 John: Yeah, I knew they were from. I knew that's where they were taking it.
7 Yeah.

8 Ryan: Okay.

9 Sam: Alright.

10 John: I mean where, where else would they take cigarettes up north? I don't
11 know if New York or Ma-- I think one of them's from Massachusetts or
12 Connecticut or something.

13 Ryan: Okay.

14 Sam: So who, who is mom? Who do they call mom in Prince William County,
15 the Prince William County store, Dale City. Who do they call the
16 employee, mom? Do you know?

17 John: It might be Paula, I guess. She's the oldest woman up there. I don't know
18 --

19 Sam: She -- Paula is?

20 John: Yeah, I don't know if they call her --

21 Sam: Okay.

22 John: I didn't ever heard that before.

23 Sam: Okay. Yeah, they say mom a lot.

24 John: Yeah.

25 * * *

1 Ryan: Wh-- while you still thinking, how long you been selling cigarettes to
2 Meryle?
3 John: God, I don't know. Probably --
4 Ryan: Has she been coming for a while?
5 John: Probably five/six years.
6 Ryan: Okay.
7 John: It could be longer. Like I say I -- at least five or six years, maybe more.
8 Ryan: How did it start?
9 John: God, I don't know.
10 Ryan: Okay.
11 John: Just walked in probably and said, can -- I want -- can I buy cigarettes.
12 Ryan: Okay. Is that the same with Rob?
13 John: Most of them, yeah.
14 Ryan: Just walked, walked in --
15 John: Yeah.
16 Ryan: -- and said, hey, I just want to do a bulk order --
17 John: Yeah.
18 Ryan: -- instead of doing like, you know, four or five cartons or something?
19 John: Yeah. Yeah.
20 Sam: Has any of your employees ever said we can't do this?
21 John: As far as what?
22 Sam: Like telling you, hey, John, we can't --
23 John: Yeah, I had one say, is it legal? I said, as long as we get state sales tax,
24 okay, and all the cigarettes are stamped with a federal stamp, yeah, there's
25 no problem.

CERTIFICATE OF ACCURACY

I, Maricarmen Betancourt, certify that the foregoing transcript of 2019-041691 for the interview of John Lash was prepared using the required transcription equipment and is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Certified By



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